

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 *SUB A³* > 1. A communication system comprising:
2 an IP-enabled communication network;
3 at least one remote site connected to the communication network, the
4 remote site comprising:
5 (a) a plurality of subscribers,
6 (b) a switch interconnecting the plurality of subscribers,
7 (c) at least one multi-line hunt group connected to the
8 switch, and
9 (d) a gateway interfacing each multi-line hunt group and
10 the communication network; and
11 at least one service site connected to the communication network, the
12 service site comprising:
13 (e) a service platform providing voice services;
14 (f) a switch connected to the service platform;
15 (g) at least one multi-line hunt group connected to the
16 switch, and
17 (h) a gateway interfacing each multi-line hunt group and
18 the communication network.
- 1 2. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the service
2 platform comprises a voicemail platform.
- 1 3. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the service
2 platform comprises a unified messaging platform.
- 1 4. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the service
2 platform comprises a computer telephony interface platform.
- 1 *SUB A³* > 5. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the
2 communication network carries voice over IP (VoIP).

1 6. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the
2 communication network carries voice over frame relay (VoFR).

1 7. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein the
2 communication network carries voice over ATM (VoATM).

1 8. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each gateway
2 comprises at least one wide area network access device.

1 *SUB #3* 9. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each multi-line
2 hunt group comprises:
3 a plurality of voice communication lines; and
4 at least one signaling line carrying signaling data.

1 10. A communication system as in claim 9 wherein each gateway
2 converts voice received over communication lines and signaling data received over
3 each signaling line into a data format acceptable by the communication network.

1 11. A communication system as in claim 9 wherein each gateway
2 converts line signaling protocols into a format acceptable by the communication
3 network and passes the converted line signaling protocols to at least one service site.

1 12. A communication system as in claim 9 wherein each gateway
2 implements a tunneling scheme with at least one gateway at a different site to
3 exchange signaling data.

1 13. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each gateway
2 compresses and decompresses voice information for reduced communication network
3 bandwidth.

1 14. A communication system as in claim 1 wherein each gateway
2 performs DS-0 mapping to map individual hunt group members across the
3 communication network.

1 15. A communication system for transmitting audible messages
2 over an IP-enabled communication network comprising:

3 a locality of subscriber units;

4 a switch interconnecting the subscriber units, the switch routing traffic
5 outside of the locality of subscriber units over at least one multi-line hunt group, each
6 multi-line hunt group including a plurality of voice communication lines and at least
7 one signaling line carrying signaling data; and

8 a gateway in communication with each multi-line hunt group and the
9 communication network, the gateway converting voice information received over
10 each communication line and signaling data received over each signaling line into a
11 data format acceptable by the communication network.

1 16. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway
2 formats data for voice over IP (VoIP).

1 17. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway
2 formats data for voice over frame relay network (VoFR).

1 18. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway
2 formats data for voice over ATM (VoATM).

1 19. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway
2 comprises at least one wide area network access device.

1 20. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway
2 implements a tunneling scheme with at least one gateway at a different site to
3 exchange signaling data.

1 21. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway
2 compresses and decompresses voice information for reduced communication network
3 bandwidth.

1 22. A communication system as in claim 15 wherein the gateway
2 performs DS-0 mapping to map individual hunt group members across the
3 communication network.

1 23. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network comprising:
3 receiving information from at least one of a plurality of subscribers;
4 determining at least one of a plurality of voice communication lines
5 and at least one signaling line in a multi-line hunt group to carry the received
6 information and associated signaling;
7 formatting information on each of the voice communication lines and
8 signaling lines into a format compatible with the communication network; and
9 sending the formatted information over the communication network.

1 24. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network as in claim 23 further comprising:
3 receiving the formatted information over the communication network;
4 reformatting the converted information back into the original format
5 for transmission over at least one of a plurality of voice communication lines and at
6 least one signaling line in a multi-line hunt group; and
7 sending the reformatted information over a multi-line hunt group.

1 25. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the reformatted information is sent
3 to a service platform comprising a voicemail platform.

1 26. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the reformatted information is sent
3 to a service platform comprising a unified messaging platform.

1 27. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the reformatted information is sent
3 to a service platform comprising a computer telephony interface platform.

1 *Sum A³* 28. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the communication network carries
3 voice over IP (VoIP).

1 29. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the communication network carries
3 voice over frame relay (VoFR).

1 30. A method of communicating over an IP-enabled
2 communication network as in claim 23 wherein the communication network carries
3 voice over ATM (VoATM).

Add A³